

Message Text

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PAGE 01 VIENTI 00792 300108Z
ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 TRSE-00 /080 W
-----300326Z 071728 /13

R 291000Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8105
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMCONSUL UDORN
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 0792

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS PINT LA
SUBJECT: CHANGES IN VIENTIANE PROVINCE ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

1. VIENTIANE PROVINCIAL AUTHORITIES HAVE APPARENTLY ABOLISHED THE BOTTOM TWO LEVELS OF ADMINISTRATION: THE NOI, WHICH IS A GROUP OF FIVE TO TEN HOUSES, AND THE KHUM OR QUARTER, CONSISTING OF FIVE TO SIX NOI, ACCORDING TO TWO LAO SOURCES WHO ONCE SERVED AS NOI CHIEFS. VIENTIANE OFFICIALS INFORMED THE POPULATION OF THE MOVE IN SEMINARS APRIL 7 AND 8. THE OFFICIALS REPORTEDLY TOLD THE POPULATION THAT THE NOI AND KHUM STRUCTURES WERE INEFFICIENT AND NO LONGER NECESSARY FOR "SOCIALIST" GOVERNMENT.

2. THREE VIENTIANE RESIDENTS SEPARATELY TOLD EMBOFF THAT THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT MADE THE CHANGES BECAUSE RESISTANCE ELEMENTS HAD INFILTRATED THE TWO
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PAGE 02 VIENTI 00792 300108Z

BOTTOM WORKING LEVELS OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE. ONE LAO EXPLAINED THAT NOI AND KHUM CHIEFS WERE SELECTED BY THE PEOPLE WHO, IN MANY CASES, CHOSE "OLD VIENTIANE" TYPES OR THE WIVES OF ROYAL LAO GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS NOW IN NORTHERN REEDUCATION CAMPS. HE ADDED THAT THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT SUSPECTED THESE PEOPLE OF USING THEIR POSITIONS IN THE LPDR GOVERNMENT

APPARATUS TO ASSIST RESISTANCE ELEMENTS.

3. IBE LAO SOURCE WITH RELATIVES IN PAKSANE TOLD EMBOFF THAT THE NOI AND KHUM WERE FIRST ELIMINATED IN PAKSANE WHERE THE RESISTANCE IS PARTICULARLY ACTIVE. SOURCE TOLD EMBOFF THAT VIETNAMESE ARMY OFFICERS STATIONED IN THE PAKSANE VICINITY INITIATED THE MOVE AND REQUESTED LAO PROVINCIAL AUTHORITIES TO ABOLISH THE NOI AND KHUM STRUCTURES THROUGHOUT THE VIENTIANE PROVINCE.

4. TWO LAO SOURCES ALSO SEPARATELY TOLD EMBOFF THAT A SECOND REASON FOR THE MOVE WAS TO ELIMINATE PETTY CORRUPTION PERPETRATED BY NOI AND KHUM CHIEFS.

5. APPARENTLY VIENTIANE IS THE ONLY PROVINCE WHERE THIS ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE HAS BEEN MADE. EMBOFF SPOKE TO A PROVINCIAL OFFICIAL IN HOUA PHAN PROVINCE APRIL 14, WHO SAID THEY STILL USED THE NOI AND KHUM SYSTEM. A LAO RESIDENT OF PAKSE WAS REQUIRED TO GET AUTHORIZATION SIGNATURES FROM HIS NOI AND KHUM CHIEFS BEFORE TRAVELING TO VIENTIANE APRIL 21. ANOTHER LAO CITIZEN SEPARATELY TOLD EMBOFF THAT HIS FATHER-IN-LAW, WHO RETURNED FROM LUANG PARABANG APRIL 26, SAID THERE HAD BEEN NO CHANGE THERE IN THE NOI AND KHUM SYSTEM. CORCORAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT, REORGANIZATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 29-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977VIENTI00792
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770151-0375
Format: TEL
From: VIENTIANE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t1977042/aaaaablw.tel
Line Count: 88
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 8d991c9f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26-Jan-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2695212
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CHANGES IN VIENTIANE PROVINCE ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE
TAGS: PINS, PINT, LA
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/8d991c9f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009